

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-05 MCT-01 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02

SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 /055 W

-----081990 282226Z /64

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4729

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 4961

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, NU

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH A MEMBER OF THE FSLN

SUMMARY: A MEMBER OF FSLN WHO TOOK PART IN THE RECENT ATTACK ON MASAYA POLICE HEADQUARTERS SPOKE TO EMBOFF RE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF FSLN. ACCORDING TO HIM, FURTHER ATTACKS WILL TAKE PLACE UNTIL THE SOMOZA REGIME FALLS; THEY WANT A REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT AND THE UNDERSTANDING OF USG. END SUMMARY.

1. ON OCT 25 POLOFF SPOKE WITH FSLN MEMBER WHO TOOK ASYLUM IN LOCAL EMBASSY FOLLOWING HIS PARTICIPATION IN FSLN ATTACK ON OCT 17 AGAINST POLICE HEADQUARTERS IN MASAYA. HE DESCRIBED THIS ATTACK AS COORDINATED WITH THE EARLIER SAN CARLOS AND OCOTAL ATTACKS. THE GOAL OF ATTACK WAS TO TAKE CONTROL OF MASAYA IF ONLY FOR BRIEF PERIOD. HE SAID SEVERAL OF THE ATTACKING GROUP HAD ESCAPED. HE SAW ONE OF THE ATTACKERS, ISRAEL LEWITES (WHO HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED BY GON AS LEADER OF THE ASSAULT), HEADED TOWARD POLICE STATION WITH HIS HANDS ON HIS HEAD IN AN ATTEMPT TO SURRENDER. WHEN LEWITES WAS OUT OF HIS SIGHT HE HEARD A BURST OF FIRING. LEWITES IS CLAIMED BY THE GON TO HAVE BEEN KILLED IN THE ATTCK.

2. THE SANDINISTA SAID HE HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF FSLN FOR SOME TIME. BY IMPLICATION, BUT NOT DIRECT STATEMENT, HE WOULD DESCRIBE HIMSELF AS A MARXIST-LENINIST, UNLIKE SOME OTHER NEWER RECRUITS WHO TOOK PART IN THE ATTACK. HE HAS BEEN A CLANDESTINE MEMBER OF THE FSLN

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FOR ABOUT EIGHT MONTHS, DURING WHICH TIME HE HAD NO CONTACT WITH HIS FAMILY. HE EXPLAINED THAT FSLN MEMBERS GO UNDERGROUND IF THEIR MEMBERSHIP MAY HAVE BEEN COMPROMISED. HE DESCRIBED TWO TENDENCIES WITHIN THE FSLN: THAT CONTROLLED BY THE LATE PEDRO ARAUZ (WHICH HAS ADVOCATED VIOLENT ATTACKS ON THE GN AND GON), AND THE OTHER DEDICATED TO THE PROLONGED WAR OF POPULAR LIBERATION WITH WHICH HE IDENTIFIED HIMSELF. HE SAID THE RECENT DEATH OF ARAUZ WAS AN IMPORTANT

BLOW BUT THAT THERE WAS ALWAYS A DEPUTY TO TAKE OVER FROM ONE OF THE LEADERS. HE HOPED THAT THERE WOULD BE GREATER UNITY IN THE FSLN FOLLOWING ARAUZ' DEATH. IN ANY CASE, HE SAID, ALL ELEMENTS OF THE FSLN WERE IN REGULAR CONTACT AND WERE FULLY AWARE OF PLANNED ACTIVITIES.

3. ACCORDING TO THIS REVOLUTIONARY, THE GOAL OF THE FSLN IS TO FORCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW REPRESENTATIVE, HONEST GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF THE POOR AND PUT AN END TO CORRUPTION REPRESSION, AND THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. HE DESCRIBED THE RECENT SERIES OF ATTACKS AS HAVING BEEN PLANNED FOR A LONG TIME BUT POSTPONED UNTIL THE FSLN HAD SUFFICIENT WEAPONS, MANPOWER AND AN INFRASTRUCTURE OF SAFEHOUSES. HE DENIED THAT THIS ACTIVITY WAS RELATED TO SOMOZA'S HEART ATTACK OR LIFTING THE MARTIAL LAW. HOWEVER, HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT PRESS FREEDOM WAS BENEFICIAL IN THAT IT GAVE THEIR EFFORTS GREATER PUBLICITY. HE ALSO DESCRIBED THE US HUMAN RIGHTS

POLICY AS IMPORTANT IN FORCING THE END TO MARTIAL LAW AND FOR HAVING ENCOURAGED CRITICISM OF THE SOMOZA REGIME.

4. HE SAID THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FSLN AND THE UDEL COALITION OF OPPOSITION FORCES WAS NOT SO MUCH IN THEIR GOALS (A NEW REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT) AS IN THEIR STRATEGY OF HOW TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL. HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH UDEL HAD A POPULAR BASE AND UDEL PRESIDENT PEDRO JOACHIN CHAMORRO HAD ALWAYS BEEN A STRONG ANTI-SOMOZA POLITICIAN, THE FSLN WAS MORE SENSITIVE TO THE NEEDS OF THE OPPRESSED

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CLASSES. HE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW OF ANY FSLN CONTACT WITH UDEL.

5. HE EXPLAINED THAT THE LESSENING OF FSLN ACTIVITIES IN THE MOUNTAINS WAS THE RESULT OF LACK OF POPULAR SUPPORT AND THAT THIS LACK OF SUPPORT WAS DUE TO GN REPRESSION IN THOSE AREAS. HE ALSO DESCRIBED THE DIFFICULT CONDITIONS IN THE MOUNTAINS AND THE LACK OF FOOD AND OTHER NECESSITIES. FURTHER, THEIR SHIFT TO THE CURRENT TACTIC OF URBAN OPERATIONS WAS DUE TO THE FACT THAT THEY BELIEVED THESE ACTIONS WOULD HAVE A MUCH GREATER IMPACT THAN IN THE COUNTRY-SIDE DUE TO THE URBAN-ORIENTED NATURE OF THE SOCIETY. ACCORDING TO THIS COLLEGE GRADUATE FROM A WEALTHY FAMILY, THE FSLN HAS A WIDE SPECTRUM OF MEMBERSHIP WITH PROBABLY THE MAJORITY COMING FROM POOR FAMILIES. THE FSLN DOES NOT ADVOCATE TERRORISM AND TRIES TO AVOID ANY INNOCENT PEOPLE BEING HURT IN THEIR OPERATIONS.

6. WITH REGARD TO THE DECLARATION OF THE TWELVE (STATE 249215), HE SAID IT HAD COME AS A SURPRISE. HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES HAD ANALYZED IT AND FOUND IT CONSTRUCTIVE BUT WERE UNAWARE OF ANY PREVIOUS LINKAGE BETWEEN THE TWELVE AND THE FSLN. RATHER THEY CONSIDERED THE ISSUANCE OF THE DECLARATION JUST PRIOR TO THE INITIATION OF THEIR ATTACKS TO BE COINCIDENTAL. HOWEVER, HE DID SAY THAT THEY THOUGHT SOME OF THE SIGNERS WOULD BE CONSTRUCTIVE IN A NEW GOVERNMENT.

7. COMMENT: THE FSLN GUERRILLA WAS INFORMED THAT HIS STATEMENTS WOULD BE REPORTED. HE AVOIDED ANY STATEMENTS WHICH WOULD REVEAL INFORMATION ON THE ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE OTHER THAN GENERAL COMMENTS. HE APPEARED TO BE SINCERE IN HIS STATEMENTS, AND THEY GENERALLY REFLECT OTHER INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE EMBASSY. HOWEVER, THE EXTENT OF HIS ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON THE FSLN IS UNKNOWN, AND HE MAY SIMPLY BE DESCRIBING A POLICY LINE IN WHICH HE HAS BEEN INDOCTRINATED.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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Subject: CONVERSATION WITH A MEMBER OF THE FSLN SUMMARY: A MEMBER OF FSLN WHO TOOK PART IN THE RECENT ATTACK ON MASAYA POLICE HEADQUARTERS SPOKE TO EMBOFF RE GOAL
TAGS: PINS, NU, FSLN
To: STATE
Type: TE
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